

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00952 060925Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 IO-13 MCT-01 /084 W
-----034593 062215Z /70
R 060701Z MAY 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE QASHDC 6126
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0952

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PINT, IZ, IR
SUBJ: IRAQI RELATIONS WITH IRAN: RELIGIOUS PILGRIMS

REF: BAGHDAD 488

1. IRANIAN UNDERSECRETARY OF AWQAF AND PILGRIMAGE LEFT IRAQ MAY 2 AFTER A FOUR-DAY VISIT. HE WAS RECEIVED BY R.C.C. MEMBER AND INTERIOR MINISTER IZZAT IBRAHIM FOLLOWING SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION OF A PILGRIMAGE AGREEMENT.
 2. BAGHDAD PRESS REPORTED AGREEMENT WITH IRAN FOR 40,000 IRANIAN PILGRIMS TO VISIT THE SHIA SHRINES IN IRAQ DURING THE COMING YEAR. VISITORS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO COME IN GROUPS FOR STAYS NOT TO EXCEED ONE WEEK.
 3. STATE ORGANIZATION FOR TOURISM ANNOUNCED THAT A LARGER NUMBER OF PILGRIMS WILL BE ABLE TO COME IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS DUE TO EXPECTED COMPLETION IN 1979 OF HOTELS IN KERBALA, NAJAF, SAMARRA AND KADHEMAIN, CITIES WHERE MAJOR SHIA SHRINES ARE LOCATED.
 4. PILGRIMAGE CONDITIONS WERE, REPORTEDLY, AN UNSETTLED ISSUE AT TIME OF RECENT VISIT OF IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER (REFTEL).
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IRAQIS, WHO SEE IT AS PART OF AN INTERNAL SECURITY PROBLEM INVOLVING THEIR OWN SHIA POPULATION, SEEM TO HAVE MADE CONCESSION TO IRANIAN URGINGS TO INCREASE THE LEVEL OF PILGRIMAGE TRAFFIC. THIS SUPPORTS VIEW THAT IRAQ REMAINS KEEN TO IMPROVE OVERALL RELATIONS WITH ITS LARGE NEIGHBOR.
PECK

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Message Attributes

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